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Human resources management

Activities of the Ethics Office

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/254, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually on the activities of the Ethics Office and the implementation of ethics policies. The report also includes information on the activities of the Ethics Panel of the United Nations, as requested by the Assembly in resolution 63/250 on human resources management.

The present report covers the period from 1 August 2015 to 31 July 2016. It also presents some developments in the services of the Ethics Office and trends in demands for those services over the past ten years since the creation of the Office in 2006.

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I. Introduction

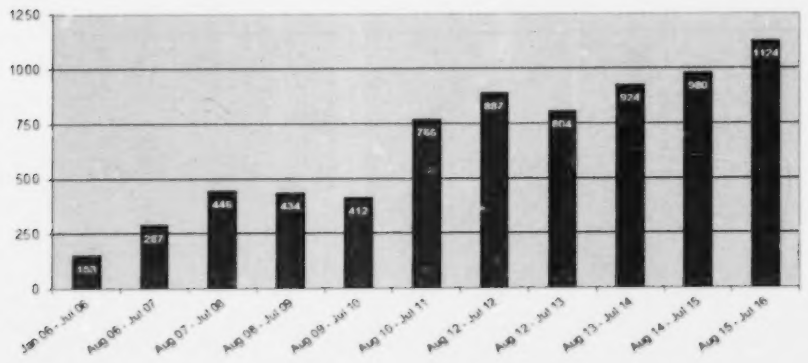
1. The United Nations Ethics Office marked its tenth anniversary through a broadcast message on i-Seek on the United Nations Public Service Day, 23 June 2016. The broadcast message celebrated the achievements of the international civil service and included a short message from the Secretary-General, who noted that "At the United Nations, ethics and integrity are of utmost importance to our work."[1] This commemoration was within the context of the Member States celebrating their public services as an institution, as decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/277. The present report not only provides an overview and assessment of the Ethics Office's activities from 1 August 2015 to 31 July 2016 but also highlights the Office's developments and achievements during the past ten years.

2. The Ethics Office was established by the Secretary-General as an independent office subsequent to the approval of the General Assembly at the 2005 World Summit (see Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 161 (d)). At that time, the creation of the Office was a part of "strengthening the United Nations" and "the Secretariat and management reform" to support Member States to achieve their vision in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

3. Since the Ethics Office began operations in 2006, it has seen an increase in demands for its services. The number of requests grew from 287 in 2006-2007 reporting period[2] to 1,124 during the current reporting period (see fig. I). There has been a corresponding increase in resources for the Office.

4. There has been an increase in coordination and coherence of ethics-related policies, procedures and activities within the United Nations system. The Secretary-General established the Ethics Panel of the United Nations (formerly the United Nations Ethics Committee) in December 2007 among applicable United Nations entities. In 2010, the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations was established to support the Secretary-General's efforts to promote collaboration on ethics-related issues within the United Nations-system entities, affiliated international organizations and international financial institutions.

Figure I
Overall requests for Ethics Office services, August 2006-July 2016



[1] https://iseek-newyork.un.org/article/celebrating-10th-anniversary-un-ethics-office

[2] This is the first comparable one-year reporting period, as the previous one covered seven months.

5. The present report, the eleventh[3] since the establishment of the Office, is being submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/254, paragraph 16 (i). The Assembly requested annual reporting on the activities of the Ethics Office and the implementation of ethics policies. During the present reporting period, the Ethics Office saw a change in leadership, with the new Director taking office on 8 September 2015. As required by its terms of reference, the Office continued to maintain its independence by having the head accountable to the Secretary-General and, as needed, access to information relevant to its work.[4]

II. Background and general information

6. Having commenced operations on 3 January 2006, and in accordance with Secretary-General's bulletins 2005/22 and 2007/11, the Ethics Office's functions include:

(a) Providing confidential advice and guidance to staff on ethical issues, including administering an ethics helpline;

(b) Administering the Organization's financial disclosure programme;

(c) Administering the Organization's protection against retaliation policy;

(d) Developing standards, training and education on ethics issues, in coordination with the Office of Human Resources Management and other offices, and conducting ethics outreach;

(e) Supporting ethics standard-setting and promoting coherence of policies and standards of the Secretariat and the Organization's funds and programmes.

7. The Ethics Office assists the Secretary-General in ensuring that staff members perform their functions consistent with the highest standards of integrity required by the Charter of the United Nations. It provides independent ethics advice and other services to the Secretariat's global staff population. The Office continues to engage with as many staff as possible through its website, dedicated ethics helpline and e-mail and outreach missions to multiple duty stations.

8. The Office designed and implemented the annual Secretariat-wide 2015 Leadership Dialogue and expanded ethics guidance and resource materials. The present report provides details on these initiatives and on the development of an online fraud prevention training course for staff members, incorporating guidance to staff in how to make better ethical choices and to raise fraud awareness. For the first time, the Ethics Office was invited to brief intergovernmental and other expert bodies and tribunals, beyond the Secretariat itself. It also continued to provide induction ethics briefings to top officials to assist them to set the "right tone at the top".

9. The present report also includes information on the activities of the Ethics Panel of the United Nations (formerly the United Nations Ethics Committee), as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/250. In addition, it reports on the 2016 annual meeting of the Ethics Network for Multilateral Organizations.

[3] The reports include the initial one, covering the first seven months after the creation of the Ethics Office.

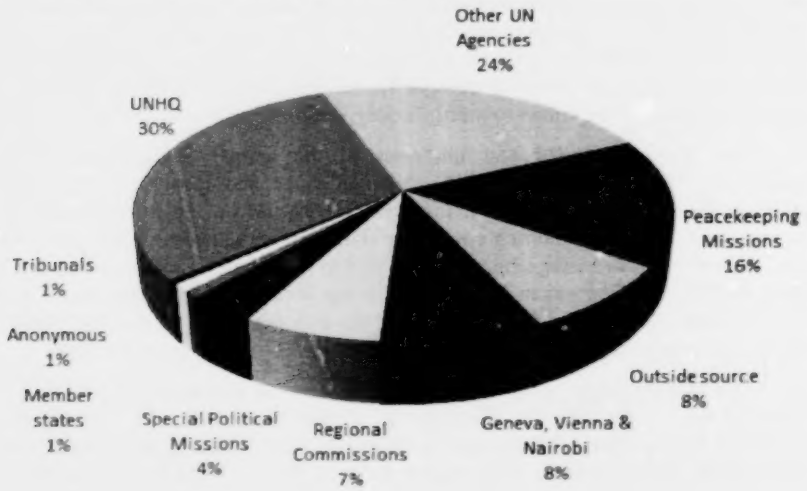
[4] See ST/SGB/2005/22, entitled "Ethics Office — establishment and terms of reference", sect. 5.

10. In collaboration with other departments, the Ethics Office has been engaged in a number of policy discussions, including recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the Secretariat's protection against retaliation policy and finalizing a review of the regulatory framework governing the financial disclosure programme. To strengthen the independence, impartiality and confidentiality of the Ethics Office, it has also begun to review its own terms of reference and those of the Ethics Panel of the United Nations, with member agencies.

11. Marking its ten years of operations, the Ethics Office began reviewing its own internal procedures for updating and improvement. They included information management and security and greater rigour in separating the advisory and protection against retaliation functions. They also included adding greater value in providing advice on procedures for determining corporate compliance, rather than transactional requests, and procurement ethics matters.

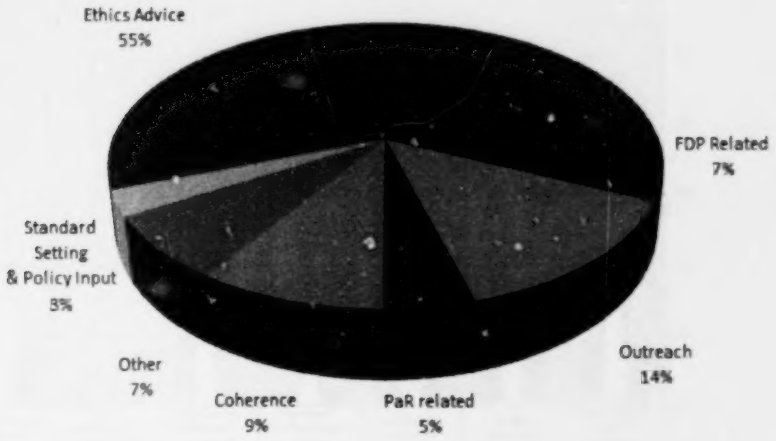
12. The Ethics Office provides services to staff of the Secretariat at duty stations in New York, Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna, all regional commissions, peacekeeping operations, special political missions, and other designated offices. Although located in New York, the Ethics Office continues to receive a significant percentage of service requests from locations and entities away from headquarters (see fig. II below). Committed to providing quality, confidential ethics advice to all staff regardless of location, the Ethics Office continues to intensify its outreach efforts. In the reporting year, it conducted approximately 122 briefing sessions during its outreach visits to United Nations offices and agencies away from New York. These efforts to enhance global awareness of Ethics Office services may have contributed to increasing service requests over the past ten years.

Figure II
Service requests by source, 1 August 2015-31 July 2016



13. As depicted in figure III below, and reflecting the Ethics Office's comprehensive ethics service coverage, ethics advice continues to account for the majority of requests for services received by the Office. Ethics advice constituted 55 per cent of requests for services in the current cycle.

Figure III
Service requests by category, 1 August 2015-31 July 2016



III. Activities of the Ethics Office

A. Advice and guidance

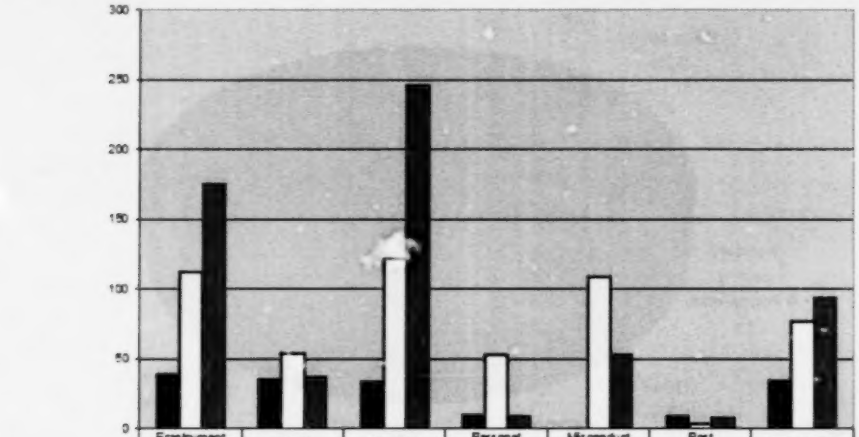
14. Public trust in the United Nations is an immeasurable asset that the Organization works hard to protect. Staff members contribute to its reputation through their daily decisions and interactions which can either enhance or diminish the Organization's standing. By providing staff members with ethical standards, training, and resources to get advice, the United Nations demonstrates a strong commitment to ethics and integrity at the organizational level.

15. The Ethics Office plays an important role in this organizational framework through its advisory function, which allows staff members to seek in confidence practical advice and guidance on ethical dilemmas arising from their work. By providing this service to individual staff members, staff groups, managers and departments, the Office empowers officials to recognize and make appropriate decisions consistent with the values and rules of the Organization. This advice is intended to prevent, mitigate and resolve actual or perceived conflicts of interest. In so doing, the reputation of the Organization and the integrity of its staff are safeguarded.

16. At this, its ten-year mark, the Office had received 622 requests for ethics advice as compared to 531 at the five-year mark and 163 enquiries at the one-year mark. As previously shown in figure III (service requests by category), 55 per cent of all enquiries received by the Office have been for ethics advice. As illustrated in figure IV

below, these concerns can be grouped under the following headings: outside activities (246 enquiries); misconduct reporting procedures (53 enquiries); other conflicts of interest (94 enquiries, including advice about procurement issues); personal investments and assets (9 enquiries); employment-related concerns (175 enquiries); gifts and hospitality (37 enquiries); and post-employment restrictions (8 enquiries).

Figure IV
Requests for ethics advice by cycle, August 2007, 2011 and 2016



	Employment related concerns	Gifts & Hospitality	Outside Activities	Personal Investments & Assets	Misconduct Reporting Procedure	Post Employment Restrictions	Other Conflict of Interest
Aug 2006 - July 2007	39	36	34	10		9	35
Aug 2010 - July 2011	112	54	122	53	109	4	77
Aug 2015 - July 2016	175	37	246	9	53	8	94

17. While ethics advice and guidance may involve clarifying or interpreting the Organization's standards concerning a prohibited or restricted activity, it can also address ethics issues that are not specifically dealt within existing regulations and policies and instead require a values-based evaluation. Based on the facts presented, the Office provides ethics advice and guidance on the appropriate course of action to ensure that the issue is resolved in the interest of the Organization. During the period under review, the Office has been consulted on a number of ethics-related concerns. The paragraphs below discuss some of the main areas of advice and demonstrate how the Office contributes to maintaining high standards of ethics, integrity and accountability.

18. Advice and guidance on outside activities involve the appraisal of proposed activities to be performed outside against those functions performed for the Organization. Staff members must ensure that their proposed outside activity does not bring into question their impartiality or independence. Almost 40 per cent of all requests for ethics advice concern outside activities. The Ethics Office has helped both staff and management to deal with potential conflicts arising from these outside activities.

19. Gifts, honours, decorations, favours or remuneration are complicated issues. Staff regulations and rules strictly limit the circumstances in which staff members

may accept gifts and honours. During the reporting period, 6 per cent of all ethics advice requests were related to those issues. Over the years, there has been a steady decline in enquiries under this category, perhaps owing to the promulgation of administrative instruction ST/AI/2010/1, entitled "Reporting, retaining and disposing of honours, decorations, favours, gifts or remuneration from governmental and non-governmental sources".

20. Requests for ethics advice under employment-related queries (28 per cent of requests for ethics advice) and misconduct reporting procedure (9 per cent of requests for ethics advice) involve staff seeking guidance on how to manage different situations that relate to their employment. Among other issues, they reflect concerns about recruitment, appointment and promotion processes; entitlements; and use of information or assets and they seek information on reporting abuse of authority, harassment and irregularities in administrative processes. The Office, in many cases, refers the staff member to the appropriate offices for assistance. Otherwise, it identifies other possible solutions and provides the Organization's rules, procedures and standards on the specific issue raised. This handling has reduced the potential for staff reporting the same grievance to multiple offices at the same time.

21. Personal investments and assets (1 per cent of requests for ethics advice) as well as other conflicts of interest situations (15 per cent of requests for ethics advice) occur when a staff member's private interests — such as outside professional relationships or personal financial assets — interfere with the proper discharge of their professional functions or obligations as a United Nations official. Many such requests for ethics advice have included situations that involved either actual, apparent or potential conflicts of interests.

22. The Ethics Office has also continued to provide independent advice to the Procurement Division, Department of Management, on issues related to the ethics, anti-corruption and corporate compliance programmes of vendors seeking to do business with the Organization. The Office worked closely with the Procurement Division to provide advice on third-party due diligence, reputational risk, and best practices in anti-corruption programmes. This line of advice began when the Organization realized the value added perspective of the independent Ethics Office on ethics issues related to vendor management.

B. Financial disclosure programme

23. The purpose of the Organization's financial disclosure programme is to protect the integrity and reputation of the Organization by identifying, managing and mitigating the risk of personal conflicts of interest. Designated staff members, including all staff at the D-1 level and above and those whose principal duties involve procurement and investment, are required to file annual disclosure statements. The review of statements is conducted by an independent external party.

24. During the 2015 annual filing cycle, covering the reporting period of 1 January to 31 December 2014, a total of 5,440 filers participated in the programme. Of that total, 1,238, or 22 per cent, of the filing population were first-time filers. As at the close of the 2015 cycle, 5,439 filers had submitted their disclosure statements and the programme had achieved 99.9 per cent compliance. (It should be noted that, of this total filer population, 100 per cent of the required United Nations Secretariat and peacekeeping personnel complied.)

25. The Ethics Office provided substantive and technical support to participating staff throughout the 2015 filing cycle that began on 1 March 2015. It responded to individual queries within 48 hours and followed up with participants until their issues were fully resolved. During the cycle, the Office communicated with filers by e-mail and telephone. The programme handled approximately 38,300 e-mail messages, the majority of which were related to technical support. A total of 23,300 were addressed by the Ethics Office and 15,000 by the programme's external reviewer. The Office continued its use of WebEx services to provide real-time system navigation assistance to new staff members and made further improvements to service provision and accessibility.

26. The Ethics Office provided briefings on the financial disclosure programme, including conflict-of-interest management, to filers and departmental focal points both at Headquarters and other locations, in person and via videoconference. During its outreach visits, the Office held customized briefings to staff located in peacekeeping missions, special political missions and other field offices. The briefings were a way for the Ethics Office to: (a) reach out to as many staff as possible; (b) facilitate compliance; and (c) raise awareness about conflict of interest and reputational risks and ways to manage them.

27. The verification of filer information ensured accuracy and completeness. During the 2015 filing cycle, 232 filers were selected for verification through random sampling. Verification procedures are in line with common principles and practices in public sector organizations.

28. During the 2015 cycle, the external reviewers identified 187 filers (3.4 per cent of the filer population) with a total of 194 items or activities that required review for managing potential conflicts of interest. Of those items, 27 related to financial holdings, 98 to outside activities, 63 to familial relationships and six (6) to other categories. These findings are consistent with those found in previous years. The programme's external reviewers, in consultation with the Ethics Office, issued individual recommendations directed at mitigating and managing all actual and potential conflicts of interest.

29. Since its inception in its current format in 2006, the programme has detected and managed 1,256 conflict-of-interest matters and kept in check conflict-of-interest and reputational risks to the Organization. It should further be noted that the filer population continues to grow over the years, from 1,704 filers in 2006 to 5,478 as at 31 July 2016. The numbers reflect the fact that, generally, about a quarter of the population is new or first-time filers and the workforce is mobile and located in operationally diverse environments.

30. In its resolution 63/250, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that the Secretary-General provide data, by duty station, on: (a) the number of individuals covered by the programme; (b) the number of individuals who have complied with their filing obligations; (c) the number of individuals who have failed to comply with those obligations; and (d) the reasons for their failure to comply. Information concerning the 2015 financial disclosure programme by department or office may be found in the annex to the present report.

31. To enhance the vigour of the application supporting the financial disclosure programme and ensure robust data security, the Ethics Office is working closely

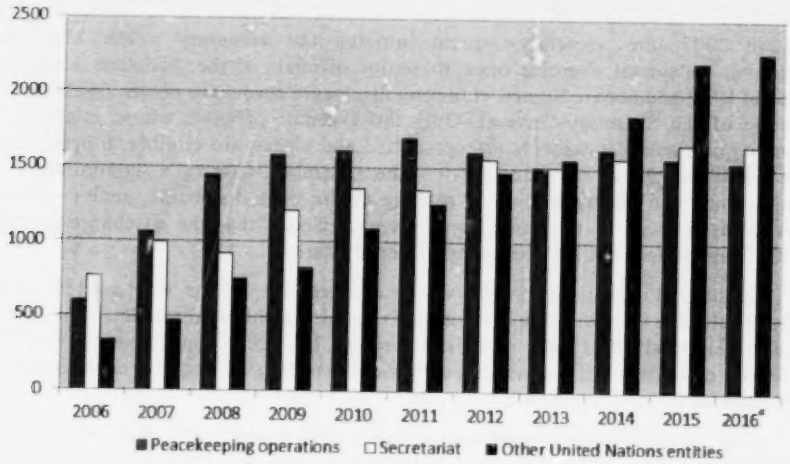
with the Office of Information and Communication Technology in developing a new information technology platform. It is expected that the new platform will benefit from the latest security features and will offer more user-friendly features.

32. In 2007, the Secretary-General initiated the voluntary public disclosure initiative, an annual exercise open to senior officials at the Assistant Secretary-General level and above. Signed voluntary disclosure forms are posted on the public website of the Secretary-General. Only those senior officials whose confidential financial disclosure statements are completed and closed are eligible to participate. The initiative is a key element of the Secretary-General's commitment to transparency and accountability. In making public their disclosure, senior officials provide assurances to the public and Member States that the discharge of their official functions is not influenced by personal interests.

33. In the 2015 voluntary public disclosure exercise, of the total of 152 senior officials eligible to participate, 111 officials opted to publicly disclose a summary of their assets, liabilities and outside interests. The 2015 participation rate has remained consistent with previous years, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to the initiative by senior officials.

34. The 2016 financial disclosure programme filing cycle was successfully launched on 1 March 2016. As at 31 July 2016, a total of 5,478 staff members were enrolled. Figure V below provides a comparison of annual filing cycle participation levels by organizational grouping and the accompanying table depicts the numerical breakdown. As shown, the number of filers continues to increase over time, although at a slower rate than during the early years of the programme. Compared to a population of 1,704 filers in 2006, the current filer population represents a significant increase. While filers from the Secretariat and peacekeeping operations continue to constitute the majority of the total population, the number of filers from other United Nations system entities who participate in the United Nations financial disclosure programme on a cost-sharing basis has increased considerably from 339 in 2006 to 2,277 in 2016, as at 31 July.

Figure V
Financial disclosure participation by entity and filing year, 2006-2016



[a] As at 31 July 2016.

Financial disclosure participation by entity and filing year, 2006-2016

	Peacekeeping operations	*Secretariat*	*Other United Nations entities*	*Total by year*
2006	603	762	339	1 704
2007	1 062	997	469	2 528
2008	1 449	919	750	3 118
2009	1 584	1 212	822	3 618
2010	1 614	1 360	1 091	4 065
2011	1 697	1 351	1 258	4 306
2012	1 600	1 558	1 472	4 630
2013	1 508	1 505	1 560 [a]	4 573
2014	1 622	1 566	1 855	5 043
2015	1 564	1 666	2 210	5 440
2016[a]	1 543	1 658	2 277	5 478

[a] As at 31 July 2016.

35. As mentioned above, in addition to the Secretariat, the Ethics Office administers the financial disclosure programme for other United Nations system entities that opt to participate on a cost-sharing basis. They include United Nations entities with smaller filing populations, or those who opt to outsource their financial disclosure service to the United Nations Secretariat. This shared service provision contributed to facilitating a common approach and harmonized application of standards in managing conflicts of interest.

36. The Ethics Office also provides substantive guidance to other United Nations system entities in developing or strengthening their own programmes. This effort supported enhancing technical capacity and raised awareness of conflicts of interest among staff, particularly as the population of filers from other United Nations entities (see table) has continued to increase over recent cycles.

37. The review of the financial disclosure programme's regulatory framework continued during 2015-2016. The Working Group continued to review the following areas: (a) the programme's focus on conflicts of interest risks; (b) staff awareness; (c) scope of coverage; and (d) lessons learned from the experiences of other United Nations entities or national policies regarding conflicts of interest management and asset declaration systems. The ongoing review of the regulatory framework by the Secretariat is to enhance the effectiveness and responsiveness of the programme to detect and manage risks of conflicts of interest for the Organization.

C. Protection of staff against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations

38. The Ethics Office administers Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2005/21, entitled "Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations". In the wake of the 2005 World Summit Outcome and recognizing the importance of "whistle-blower" protection in promoting the reporting of fraud, corruption, and other serious forms of misconduct, the Secretariat's protection against retaliation policy was developed. It is an essential component of anti-corruption measures for United Nations operations, designed to encourage reports of potential wrongdoing and also serve as an internal accountability mechanism.

39. In accordance with ST/SGB/2005/21, the Ethics Office receives complaints of alleged retaliation and conducts preliminary reviews to determine if a complainant engaged in a protected activity and, if so, whether the protected activity was a contributing factor in causing the alleged retaliation. If the Office determines that a prima facie case of retaliation has been established, the matter is referred to the Office of Internal Oversight Services for investigation. The Ethics Office may recommend interim protection measures to safeguard the complainant and makes a determination based on its review of the investigation report and supporting evidence.

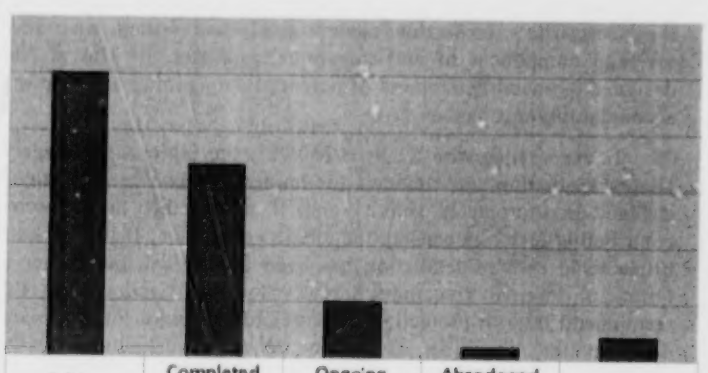
40. During the current reporting cycle, the Etnics Office received 50 enquiries under the protection against retaliation policy. Of these, 25 were requests for advice under the protection policy and not claims for protection while 2 were outside of the Office's jurisdiction. The submissions that fell outside of the jurisdiction of the Office were either because the claimant did not belong to the Secretariat or the agencies covered by the United Nations Ethics Office or because the submission was not a claim for protection but rather a report of misconduct or a workplace dispute. Staff members raising workplace concerns not covered by the policy were advised of other available resources and referred to appropriate offices, including the Ombudsman and Mediation Services, the Management Evaluation Unit, the Office of Staff Legal Assistance, and the Office of Human Resources Management. Staff members reporting on misconduct were directed to the appropriate channels.

41. The Office initiated 23 preliminary reviews in those cases where staff alleged retaliation in accordance with ST/SGB/2005/21. Of these, 17 reviews were completed, 5 were ongoing, and 1 claim was abandoned by the staff member, by the end of the reporting period. Of the 17 completed preliminary reviews, 11 claims did not present a prima facie case of retaliation. Regarding these cases, it was determined that either the complainant had not engaged in an activity protected by the policy (i.e. reported misconduct through an established channel, cooperated with a duly authorized audit or investigation), or the protected activity was not a contributing factor in causing the alleged retaliation. A majority of these cases concerned workplace disputes between the complainants and their colleagues or supervisors.

42. In six cases, the Ethics Office determined that there was a prima facie case that the protected activity was a contributing factor in causing the alleged retaliation. Of those, the Ethics Office recommended to the Secretary-General in four cases that interim measures be taken to safeguard the interests of the claimants, pending completion of the investigation. In the remaining two cases, upon consultation, the claimants did not seek interim protection measures. Six cases are pending investigations by the Office of Internal Oversight Services or are in the process of being referred to that Office.

Figure VI

Actions taken on protection against retaliation policy enquiries, 1 August 2015-31 July 2016

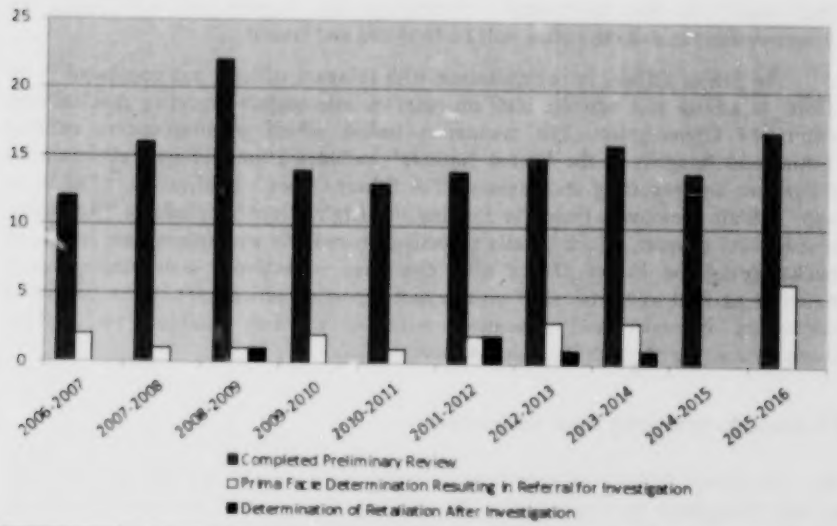


	Advice Provided	Completed Preliminary Review	Ongoing Preliminary Review	Abandoned Preliminary Review	No Jurisdiction
Aug-15 to July-16	25	17	5	1	2

43. From 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2016, the Ethics Office completed preliminary reviews on 153 claims for protection against retaliation, of which 21 were found to be prima facie cases in which the protected activity was determined to be a contributing factor in causing the alleged retaliation or threat of retaliation. Of the 21 prima facie cases, 5 were found to involve retaliation, 7 did not find retaliation, 6 are pending investigation, 1 was not investigated in the past by the Office of

Internal Oversight Services and a further 2 cases were resolved informally to the satisfaction of the claimant.[5]

Figure VII
Protection against retaliation statistics 2006-2016



	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Completed preliminary review	12	16	22	14	13	14	15	16	14	17[a]
Prima facie determination resulting in referral for investigation	2	1	1	2	1	2	3	3	0	6
Determination of retaliation after investigation	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	–[b]

[a] Does not include four ongoing preliminary reviews and one request abandoned by the staff member during the preliminary review stage.

[b] Pending investigation results.

[5] There results correspond with those of comparable organizations. The World Bank's Office of Ethics and Business Conduct closed a total of 261 cases in the fiscal year 2013, of which 5 (or 2 per cent) were retaliation cases. In the fiscal year 2012, that Office closed a total of 278 cases, of which 8 (or 3 per cent) were retaliation cases. And in the fiscal year 2011, the Office closed a total of 287 cases, of which 7 (or 2 per cent) were retaliation cases. Similarly, the Swiss Federal Audit Office, the Swiss Federal Administration's contact point for "whistle-blowers", reported receiving 64 impropriety reports in 2015, of which 2 (or 3 per cent) were transmitted to the Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland. In Canada, the Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner referred six cases of reprisals to the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Tribunal since 2011-2012. The United States Office of Special Counsel, in the fiscal year 2014, closed 4,666 cases, of which 8 (or 0.17 per cent) involved protecting "whistle-blowers" from retaliation. (See UN Special, July-August 2016 edition at: www.unspecial.org/2016/07/the-un-whistleblower-protection-policy-2/.)

44. In the reporting period, the Ethics Office continued to participate in and advise an ad hoc working group established by the Staff-Management Committee to make recommendations for revising the policy on protection against retaliation. During the year, a proposed revised policy was presented to the Committee and reviewed by the working group. Composed of staff and management representatives, the working group is currently in the final stages of its deliberations and will then prepare its final report to the Committee. Thereafter, the Committee will make its recommendations and the policy will be finalized and issued.

45. The Ethics Office, in collaboration with relevant offices, has continued in its efforts to advise and educate staff on relevant misconduct reporting mechanisms within the Organization. The mandatory online ethics training course entitled "Ethics and Integrity at the United Nations" includes a module on staff reporting obligations and reporting mechanisms. The Ethics Office's publication, "The Road map: A Staff Member's Guide to Finding the Right Place" includes a "Reporting misconduct" chapter, which details reporting procedures and appropriate reporting mechanisms. The Ethics Office also continues to actively distribute outreach materials as well as advise staff on relevant reporting procedures in the course of conducting outreach and education missions to duty stations away from headquarters, and through its ethics advice.

D. Outreach, training and education

46. The Ethics Office continued to provide outreach, training and education services to staff throughout the Organization. By striving to reach staff and raise awareness, the Ethics Office fulfils its mandate of identifying and addressing ethics-related concerns across the Organization, thereby strengthening a shared ethical culture. In addition, for the first time, the Office presented specialized ethics briefings to intergovernmental and expert bodies and tribunals, beyond the Secretariat.

47. Pursuant to this mandate, the Ethics Office conducted outreach missions to the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (Juba), the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, the United Nations Regional Service Centre (Entebbe), the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, United Nations Logistics Base/Global Services Centre, the United Nations Office in Geneva (including the Economic Commission for Europe) and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (Syrian Arab Republic).

48. During these missions, the Ethics Office provided outreach and advisory services. The Ethics Office held town hall meetings, provided guidance on conflicts of interest issues to managers and confidential ethics advice to individual staff members, and conducted tailored ethics briefings and presentations to main offices and field location offices.

49. As recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 65/247, the Ethics Office conducted ethics induction briefings for senior leaders. The

briefings, held upon request by the incoming senior officials, are intended to assist the "tone at the top", positively influencing the Organization's culture of ethics, integrity and accountability. The Director conducted 14 ethics induction briefings with newly appointed Assistant Secretaries-General and Under-Secretaries-General, including Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. The briefings addressed personal ethical responsibility, recognizing and proactively seeking advice to manage potential conflicts of interest, retaliation prevention and protecting staff from retaliation, encouraging a "speaking up" culture, and transparency and accountability practices.

50. In coordination with the Department of Political Affairs, the Ethics Office additionally provided six ethics briefings for incoming members of various panels of experts. The briefings enhance awareness of the United Nations ethical expectations on the part of contracted experts conducting essential work for the Organization.

51. During the reporting period, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Ethics Office launched the 2015 leadership dialogue, "Fulfilling our mission: taking individual responsibility". The leadership dialogue programme provides an annual opportunity for staff and managers at headquarters and field locations to engage in a one-hour discussion on ethics and integrity issues. Focused on the importance of personal responsibility and accountability on the part of all staff members in achieving the goals and mission of the Organization, the 2015 leadership dialogue topic was selected in response to strong staff interest in the topics of good management and effective and trustworthy organizational practices.

52. The Ethics Office, in collaboration with the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Department of Management, is currently developing the 2016 leadership dialogue as a discussion guide on fraud awareness and prevention. The Ethics Office is also developing, in conjunction with the Office of Human Resources Management and the two aforementioned offices, an e-learning programme on fraud awareness and prevention that will address in more detail the levels of anti-fraud awareness and prevention required of all staff members.

53. In hosting materials such as the leadership dialogue guides, the ethics guide, and the road map, the Ethics Office website continues to provide essential information on ethical values and standards to both United Nations personnel and the general public. During 2015-2016, the website received approximately 140,000 page views and 105,000 unique page views. Available via i-Seek and www.un.org/en/ethics (as well as the sites of the other official languages of the United Nations), the website contains comprehensive materials, links, and other information relating to ethics.

54. During the reporting period, the Ethics Office actively implemented further outreach initiatives by launching a holiday broadcast on gifts to guide and advise staff members on the appropriate actions to take in terms of reporting gifts. The communications serve to renew the knowledge and understanding of staff members of the purpose, mandate and goals of the Ethics Office and the essential role of staff members in embodying the values and integrity of the Organization.

E. Standard-setting and policy support

55. Developing standards and providing policy advice and support are among the core mandates of the Ethics Office. The Office continued to provide significant assistance to other departments/offices and various United Nations entities in developing policies and standards pertaining to ethics and integrity, including issues relating to institutional integrity, individual integrity and process integrity, which are often intertwined.

56. Notably, the Ethics Office regularly and actively provides policy advice to various offices regarding standards governing staff conduct and conflict of interest vetting. This ranged from providing comments on policy provisions, recommending draft standards on ethics and integrity for integration into broader policy frameworks, to formulating questions for the purpose of vetting conflicts of interest. The Office provided input on various policy issues, such as vendor management, anti-fraud and corruption framework, conflict-of-interest aspects in environmental governance, code of ethics and/or code of conduct for different categories of personnel, pre-appointment vetting for potential conflicts of interest for senior appointments and terms and conditions for certain types of external engagement by the Organization and its staff in an official capacity.

57. As alluded to above, the Office actively participated in the development of the Organization's policy framework on fraud awareness and prevention, led by the Department of Management. It provided comments on related questionnaires and policy reviews by various offices or entities.

58. The Office further examined options and provided advice on potential risk areas involving certain types of personnel and their contractual arrangements, so as to minimize reputational risk to the Organization while enhancing the Organization's ability to tap into their special skills and expertise, which are valuable to the Organization. It provided assistance to other offices in revising their policies and procedures on personal investments, on induction/onboarding procedures for integrity requirements and on staff conduct and conflicts of interest prevention.

59. The Ethics Office provided guidance to field offices, peacekeeping missions and regional commissions regarding outside activities, the use of social media, ethics training, and conflicts of interest prevention and mitigation, especially as they relate to field staff. It collaborated with other Secretariat departments in examining the management and disposal of gifts, honours, decorations and favours to staff members in terms of mitigating reputational risk to the Organization. In particular, the Ethics Office supported the Department of Management in the finalization of an online gift registry.

60. The Ethics Office also participated in the sixth session of the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, upon the invitation of the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime, to contribute to the overall standard-setting and development of policy issues. It hosted two round-table discussions with senior personnel of the World Bank's Office of Ethics and Business Conduct, a local government office and other Secretariat offices to exchange experience and examine common ethics and integrity policy issues as well as their implications.

61. In relation to requirements under new public sector accounting standards, the Ethics Office provided significant support in developing a relevant methodology for vetting key management personnel for conflicts of interest, relating to third-party transactions. The Office has successfully completed two review cycles.

62. In sum, the Ethics Office provided significant technical assistance to various United Nations entities in developing policies and procedures regarding safeguarding staff conduct and integrity issues. Notably, the Ethics Office provided policy advice in the areas of financial disclosure, conflict of interest management, and protection against retaliation. Through this support, the Ethics Office contributed to ethics policy development and integrity capacity-building within United Nations entities.

IV. Ethics Panel of the United Nations and the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations

63. The Ethics Panel of the United Nations, established in December 2007 as the United Nations Ethics Committee and renamed in April 2013, is mandated to create a unified set of ethical standards and policies for the Secretariat and separately administered organs and programmes. It further consults on important and complex ethics matters, having system-wide implications. The Panel is chaired by the Director of the Ethics Office.

64. The Ethics Panel is composed of the heads of the ethics offices of the funds and programmes and the Secretariat. Pursuant to Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2007/11, the Ethics Office provides ethics services to the staff of those separately administered organs and programmes that have not yet designated an Ethics Officer.

65. In the course of the reporting period, the Ethics Panel met in 11 formal sessions. In addition, its members regularly consulted one another on a wide range of issues having implications for its member organizations. The Ethics Panel continued to focus on enhancing coherence and consistency in the application of ethics standards, and reviewed lessons learned from the implementation of its core mandates. The Panel further reviewed the annual reports prepared by member ethics offices.

66. During 2015-2016, the Ethics Panel members devoted a large part of their attention and effort to the review of relevant policies pertaining to or having significant implications for their core mandated areas. These include the terms of reference of the Ethics Office, the policy on system-wide application of ethical standards which established the Ethics Panel of the United Nations, and the Secretariat's policies on protection against retaliation and the financial disclosure programme. It also reviewed issues relating to the independence and accountability of an ethics office, based on lessons learned from recent related developments.

67. The Panel developed a common approach to ethics training and a common presentation for use in outreach visits, guidance on the use of social media, ethics office data security and confidentiality, harmonizing data collection for reporting purposes, provision of advice on outside activities, gifts and honours, and ethics office strategic plans. The Panel also identified and deliberated on emerging ethical challenges, posing risks to the Organization. The Panel consulted, inter alia, on matters concerning reputational risk management, organizational and personal

conflicts of interest, thereby contributing to the harmonized and consistent application of ethical standards across member organizations and entities.

68. During the reporting period and pursuant to relevant provisions of section 4.3 of ST/SGB/2007/11, the Chair of the Panel consulted its members in her independent review of two matters referred to the Chair by concerned staff members from their respective funds or programmes. The ethics offices of the respective funds and programmes were recused from these consultations.

69. The Ethics Panel continues to play an essential role as the sole mandated and formalized mechanism in the field of ethics and integrity in the United Nations system and the broader intergovernmental and international organization family. It has proven to be an effective tool in helping to promote the coherent application of ethical standards. In enhancing harmonized ethics and integrity policies and practices among member organizations, the Ethics Panel plays a vital role in fostering a "United Nations identity" based on integrity and accountability. Through promoting an organizational culture of ethics and integrity within the international civil service, the Ethics Panel has reaffirmed its impact in advocating and forging healthier institutions with unwavering integrity and acts as a primary mechanism for promoting policy coherence.

70. The United Nations Ethics Office and Ethics Panel members continued to participate in the activities of the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations. The Network was established in June 2010 in support of the Secretary-General's efforts to promote system-wide collaboration on ethics-related issues within the United Nations family. Serving as a broad forum of ethics functions from United Nations-system entities, affiliated international organizations, and international financial institutions, the Network provides support for professional development, benchmarking, and the exchange of ethics policies and practices. The Network's membership has recently expanded with the participation of intergovernmental organizations and financial institutions having consultative and collaborative arrangements with the United Nations system. This growth has contributed to a more extensive exchange of experience and lessons learned in the delivery of ethics services in multilateral organizations. The eighth meeting of the Network was held in Madrid from 12 to 15 July 2016, and was hosted by the United Nations World Tourism Organization.

71. Enhancing collaboration with and supporting United Nations system entities and other international organizations, the Ethics Office responded to multiple ethics advice, policy, and information requests from them. The Ethics Office provided technical assistance to the World Intellectual Property Organization upon the latter's request. This assistance included technical advice, ethics briefings and experience-sharing. Advice and guidance to other entities included the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Pan American Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations University, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the World Health Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the International Organization for Migration, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, the Special Tribunal for

Lebanon, the United Nations Volunteers, the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.

V. Observations and conclusions

72. Since the creation of the United Nations Ethics Office in 2006, there is a greater awareness and articulation of the ethical risks to the Organization on the part of staff and management. The Organization has defined more precisely for staff the concept of conflicts of interest in staff regulations and rules and has communicated the necessity of mitigating such conflicts to safeguard the independence and impartiality of the international civil service. The Office has contributed to the daily observance of the Oath of Office by staff. It has also recognized that guarding against reputational risks in third-party dealings requires due diligence and proactive management of its business partner relationships.

73. As envisioned by the General Assembly in 2005 at the World Summit, the Ethics Office has actively implemented its mandate of assisting the Secretary-General to promote a culture of ethics, transparency and accountability. In so doing, the Office was a key element of the management reform and strengthening the Secretariat to support Member States to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

74. Ten years later, the Member States have forged the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, crystallized into the Sustainable Development Goals. The Secretariat itself and those United Nations agencies involved in the development pillar have been considering ways to make themselves more fit for purpose for this new agenda as well as other priorities.

75. Reflecting the importance of a strong ethics function for the future, during the reporting period the Ethics Office received 1,124 requests for ethics services. This figure constitutes the highest number of requests received in the history of the Office. Highlights of the period include: responding to 622 confidential ethics advice requests; managing the 2015 cycle of the financial disclosure programme, involving the review of 5,440 disclosure files; undertaking 155 outreach, training, and education activities; responding to 50 enquiries concerning the Secretariat's protection against retaliation policy; and administering the 2015 leadership dialogue initiative.

76. Since its inception, the Office has increased its global outreach efforts to reach offices away from Headquarters, peacekeeping and field missions, special political missions, and regional commissions. These efforts are essential to preventing, mitigating, and managing ethical and reputational risk within the Organization. The commitment of the Ethics Office and its interaction with staff, regardless of location, consistently demonstrates a strong staff demand for counselling, consultation, and guidance on ethics and integrity issues.

77. In the course of its work, the Ethics Office remains a leading advocate for the values and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The Ethics Office considers important the lessons learned from ethical issues raised in the past ten years and the need to ensure an approach to ethics outreach and communication that meets the needs of stakeholders across the Organization. By directly engaging with staff and other stakeholders on these values, and in promoting adherence to the

highest standards of efficiency, competency, and integrity, the Ethics Office serves a distinctive and indispensable role within the Organization.

78. In an operating environment that is marked by increasing complexity, the United Nations faces new and increasing challenges. The proliferation of stakeholders in its work; innovations in technology that impact how the world communicates and conducts business; and new human, physical and cyber security risks call for a United Nations served by an international civil service, fit for purpose.

79. Looking ahead, the Ethics Office needs to strengthen its independence. At the same time, the Office needs to continue working with other offices in fulfilling its mandate and staying on message. A reminder of service to the public will assist to rally staff to recommit themselves to the vision and purpose of the United Nations. The upcoming transition in leadership with the new Secretary-General will be a critical opportunity for demonstration of an ethical "tone at the top".

80. In the course of this work, an increasing need has emerged to ensure coherence and comparability of Ethics Office reporting in terms of human resource goals and results across the Organization and the funds and programmes. Following the establishment of the Ethics Office in January 2006 and in response to the General Assembly's request for reporting on the activities of the Ethics Office, the Secretary-General has to date submitted his annual report on the basis of a reporting cycle of 1 August to 31 July. While continuing to adhere to the requirement for annual reporting to the General Assembly, and for the benefit of harmonization and comparability, the Secretary-General wishes to bring to the attention of the General Assembly his intention to adjust the annual reporting cycle from the midyear time frame to the calendar year cycle, that is, covering the period from 1 January to 31 December. As a transitional step, the next annual report of the Secretary-General to the Assembly will cover the period from 1 August 2016 to 31 December 2017 (instead of 31 July 2017) and will be submitted in 2018. Thereafter, the next annual report covering a full calendar year will be submitted in 2019.

81. **The General Assembly is requested to take note of the present report, including the adjustment in the annual reporting cycle.**

Annex

Financial disclosure programme compliance level, 2015

United Nations entity	*Required filers*	*Completed filings*	*Non-compliant(s)*
United Nations Secretariat			
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions secretariat	2	2	–
United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination secretariat	3	3	–
Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate	4	4	–
Department for General Assembly and Conference Management	26	26	–
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	52	52	–
Department of Management	249	249	–
Department of Political Affairs, including special political missions	403	403	–
Department of Public Information	38	38	–
Department of Safety and Security	19	19	–
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	53	53	–
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	34	34	–
Economic Commission for Africa	122	122	–
Economic Commission for Europe	9	9	–
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	66	66	–
Ethics Office	11	11	–
Executive Office of the Secretary-General	15	15	–
International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda	21	21	–
International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia	33	33	–
Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals	27	27	–
Office for Disarmament Affairs	5	5	–
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	31	31	–
Office of Administration of Justice	2	2	–
Office of Internal Oversight Services	11	11	–
Office of Legal Affairs	20	20	–
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	18	18	–
Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services	3	3	–
Office of the President of the General Assembly	4	4	–
Office of the Special Adviser on Africa	4	4	–
Office of the Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan	2	2	–
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region	3	3	–
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflicts	1	1	–
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict	3	3	–

United Nations entity	*Required filers*	*Completed filings*	*Non-compliant(s)*
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children	1	1	–
Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States	4	4	–
Peacebuilding Support Office	4	4	–
Regional Commissions New York Office	1	1	–
Special Court for Sierra Leone	1	1	–
Special Envoy on Ebola	2	2	–
Special Tribunal for Lebanon	28	28	–
United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund	73	73	–
United Nations Office to the African Union	5	5	–
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	22	22	–
United Nations Office at Geneva	85	85	–
United Nations Office at Nairobi	49	49	–
United Nations Office at Vienna	15	15	–
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	82	82	–
Subtotal (excluding peacekeeping operations)	**1 666**	**1 666**	–
Peacekeeping operations	1 564	1 564	–
United Nations bodies/agencies and others	2 210	2 209	1
Total	**5 440**	**5 439**	**1**

United Nations

A/71/335

General Assembly

Distr.: General
17 August 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session
Item 49 of the provisional agenda*
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine

Note by the Secretary-General

The seventieth report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, covering the period from 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016, has been transmitted by the Chair of the Commission for communication to the States Members of the United Nations in accordance with paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 512 (VI) and paragraph 2 of Assembly resolution 70/83.

* A/71/150.

16-14288 (E) 240816

Please recycle

Seventieth report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine

In paragraph 2 of its resolution 70/83, the General Assembly requested the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine to report to the Assembly as appropriate, but no later than 1 September 2016. The Commission recalls its report of 13 August 2015 (A/70/319, annex) and observes that it has nothing new to report since its submission.

A/71/336

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United Nations A/71/336

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 August 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session
Item 70 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Central Emergency Response Fund

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report describes the activities of the Central Emergency Response Fund from 1 January to 31 December 2015. The Fund has continued to demonstrate its value in funding timely, targeted and reliable life-saving assistance to people in humanitarian crises. During the reporting period, the Emergency Relief Coordinator disbursed $469.7 million for humanitarian assistance through 464 projects in 45 countries. In addition, a loan of $7.3 million was approved from the Fund's loan facility. As at 31 December 2015, the Fund had received $400.3 million for 2015, meeting 89 per cent of its annual $450 million target. The shortfall of $49.7 million was largely due to a strong United States dollar vis-à-vis core donor currencies. The Fund's secretariat also completed reviews of its work in key humanitarian crises and disseminated the results of two scoping studies designed to assess changes to ensure that the Fund is fit for the future. In his report for the World Humanitarian Summit, the Secretary-General called for an expansion of the Fund to $1 billion per year by 2018.

* A/71/150.

16-12602 (E) 060916

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/106 on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the detailed use of the Central Emergency Response Fund. The report covers the Fund's activities from 1 January to 31 December 2015.

II. Overview of the funding commitments of the Fund

2. In 2015, the Emergency Relief Coordinator approved grants totalling $469.7 million to projects in 45 countries (see table 1). Allocations included $300.7 million under the rapid response window and $168.9 million for underfunded crises through the underfunded emergencies window. The Coordinator also approved a loan of $7.3 million in October 2015 for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to bridge a funding gap in field projects. Between the inception of the Fund in 2005 and the end of 2015, $4.2 billion has been allocated for humanitarian assistance in 93 countries. Grants are allocated to United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). These are referred to collectively as "agencies" in the present report.

Table 1
Central Emergency Response Fund allocations from 1 January to 31 December 2015
(United States dollars)

	Rapid response window	*Underfunded emergencies window*	*Total*
Amount approved	300 736 172	168 913 836	469 650 008
Number of recipient countries or territories	35	20	45[a]
Number of projects funded	300	164	464

[a] Certain countries or territories received allocations from both funding windows.

3. In accordance with Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2010/5, at least two thirds of the Fund's grant allocations are intended for disbursement through its rapid response window. Allocations from this window promote early response to humanitarian needs by funding critical, life-saving humanitarian activities in the initial stages of a sudden-onset crisis or in the case of a significant deterioration of an existing emergency. During the reporting period, the Fund provided support through this window in 35 countries (see table 2). The largest recipients were Yemen ($44.2 million), Nepal ($19.1 million), Ethiopia ($17 million), Malawi ($16.9 million) and Cameroon ($14.1 million). The top recipients were affected by conflict (Cameroon, Yemen) and natural disasters (Ethiopia, Malawi, Nepal). Several thematic areas also received high levels of support from the rapid response window of the Fund. For example, the Fund provided more than $58 million for assistance to 2.4 million people affected by Boko Haram-related violence in West and Central Africa. In July, the Fund made allocations of nearly $59 million to meet critical needs in eight countries affected by El Niño.

Table 2
Rapid-response window allocations by country
(United States dollars)

Country	*Total allocations*
Afghanistan	5 802 858
Algeria	5 051 640
Cameroon	14 071 268
Central African Republic	11 556 590
Chad	10 515 475
Chile	777 854
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	6 276 701
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6 792 923
El Salvador	2 710 000
Ethiopia	17 003 929
Haiti	9 157 785
Honduras	2 187 908
Iraq	4 490 040
Libya	1 491 012
Madagascar	2 294 798
Malawi	16 925 025
Mauritania	2 532 163
Mozambique	3 996 365
Myanmar	10 405 409
Nepal	19 113 716
Niger	13 741 648
Nigeria	9 889 075
Pakistan	11 000 547
Peru	914 395
Philippines	1 512 074
Rwanda	7 984 746
Somalia	5 300 084
South Sudan	13 446 494
Sudan	9 079 147
Uganda	3 238 788
Ukraine	4 920 172
United Republic of Tanzania	9 156 319
Vanuatu	5 038 408
Yemen	44 250 104
Zimbabwe	8 110 712
Total	**300 736 172**

4. Up to one third of the Fund's allocations are intended for underfunded emergencies. These allocations are made during two rounds and allow partners to carry out life-saving activities in places where humanitarian assistance is chronically underfunded. Such allocations help to draw attention to gaps in humanitarian response and to places where donor interest may have waned. In 2015, the Emergency Relief Coordinator approved $168.9 million from this window for 20 countries. The highest amounts went to humanitarian operations in response to the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic ($77.4 million across six countries), the Horn of Africa ($33 million across three countries) and the Darfur crisis ($21.1 million). Most funding for the top recipients from this window went to assist conflict-affected people. Funds for Ethiopia and Somalia also supported response to drought. A total of $98.5 million was allocated in the first round; $70.5 million was allocated in the second round (see table 3).

Table 3
Underfunded-emergency window allocations by country
(United States dollars)

Country	*First round*	*Second round*	*Total*
Afghanistan		7 983 646	7 983 646
Bangladesh		2 992 959	2 992 959
Burundi	2 495 246		2 495 246
Chad		5 998 567	5 998 567
Colombia	2 994 382		2 994 382
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	2 000 285		2 000 285
Democratic Republic of the Congo	8 047 670		8 047 670
Djibouti	3 000 059		3 000 059
Egypt	3 500 065		3 500 065
Eritrea		2 993 896	2 993 896
Ethiopia		10 015 968	10 015 968
Iraq	7 988 899		7 988 899
Jordan	9 000 346		9 000 346
Lebanon	18 004 139		18 004 139
Myanmar		5 367 651	5 367 651
Rwanda	2 498 220		2 498 220
Somalia		19 989 234	19 989 234
Sudan		15 116 739	15 116 739
Syrian Arab Republic	29 926 021		29 926 021
Turkey	8 999 844		8 999 844
Total	**98 455 176**	**70 458 660**	**168 913 836**

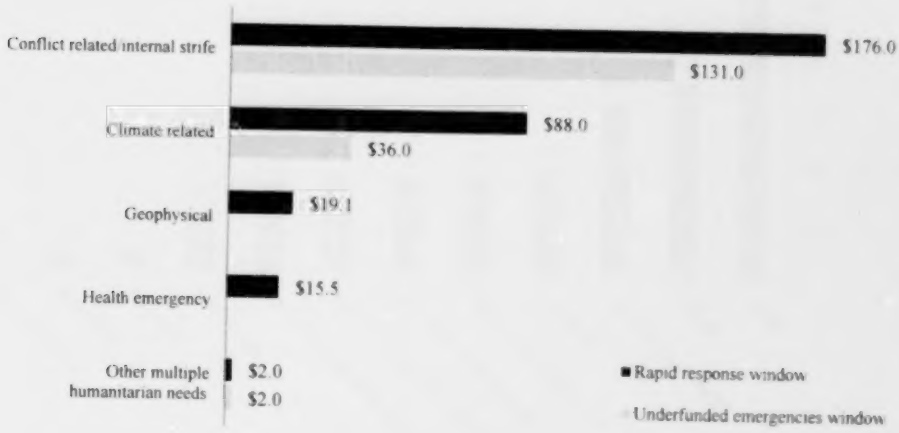
5. In 2015, partners used Fund allocations to assist people facing a range of humanitarian emergencies (see figure I). Nearly two thirds (65 per cent) went to projects to support conflict-affected people or people facing needs resulting from internal strife. This was a jump of more than 10 per cent from 2014, when 54.5 per cent of disbursements went to support conflict-affected people. The highest amounts

went to Yemen ($44.2 million), the Syrian Arab Republic ($29.9 million), the Sudan ($22.2 million), Lebanon ($18 million), Chad ($16.5 million), Cameroon ($14.1 million) and South Sudan ($13.4 million).

Figure I

Central Emergency Response Fund, 2015 allocations by emergency type

(Millions of United States dollars)



6. The Fund's second major focus in 2015 was climate-related emergencies. More than one quarter of all disbursements ($124 million) assisted people affected by such events, a substantial increase compared with $41.5 million in 2014. The high 2015 allocations in this area were partly driven by the response to El Niño. In addition to the $124 million, $19.1 million was used for post-earthquake relief in Nepal.

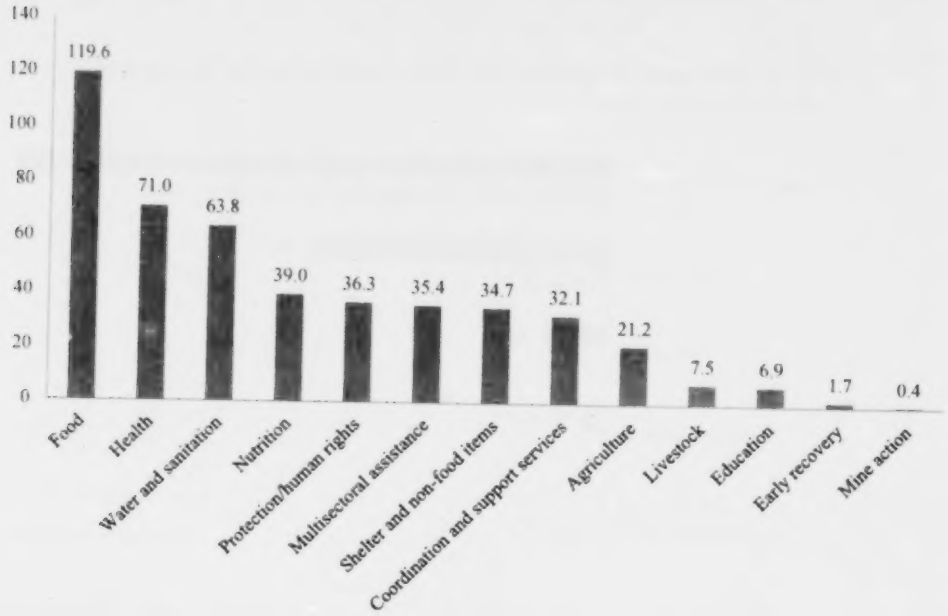
7. In terms of sectors, nearly one third ($148.3 million) of all allocations were for food security interventions.[1] Food- and nutrition-related needs accounted for nearly 40 per cent of the Fund allocations. Of this combined total of $187.3 million for food security and nutrition-related interventions, $98.7 million was spent on conflict-related requirements and $83.7 million on climate-related needs (see figure II).

[1] A combination of food aid and support for agriculture and livelihoods.

Figure II

Central Emergency Response Fund, 2015 grant allocations by sector

(Millions of United States dollars)



8. Water and sanitation interventions accounted for $63.8 million of 2015 allocations. Of this amount, $40.5 million was provided through the rapid response window. Protection interventions accounted for $36.3 million and emergency shelter and non-food items accounted for $34.7 million. The Fund provided about $35.4 million for multisectoral interventions, for example support to vulnerable asylum seekers, refugees and mixed migrants with basic needs and rehabilitation interventions. In addition, $32.1 million was allocated for coordination and support services. This was a decline from the $41.2 million allocated to this sector in 2014.

9. In 2015 there was a regional shift in the allocation of grants from the Fund compared with 2014. A total of $122.7 million was allocated for interventions in the Middle East[2] in 2015, which represented 26 per cent of all allocations compared with 10.9 per cent in 2014. Nearly all allocations to the Middle East were related to conflict.

10. Humanitarian response in Africa continued to receive the highest share of Fund allocations, at $245.8 million, or 52 per cent of all 2015 allocations. This was driven largely by needs related to El Niño in Ethiopia, Malawi, Somalia and Zimbabwe, and by conflict-related humanitarian needs in Cameroon, Chad, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan. However, this share represented a decline from the 73.5 per cent allocated to the region in 2014.

[2] Not including $3.5 million allocated for Egypt to assist refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic, which is counted under the Africa regional allocation.

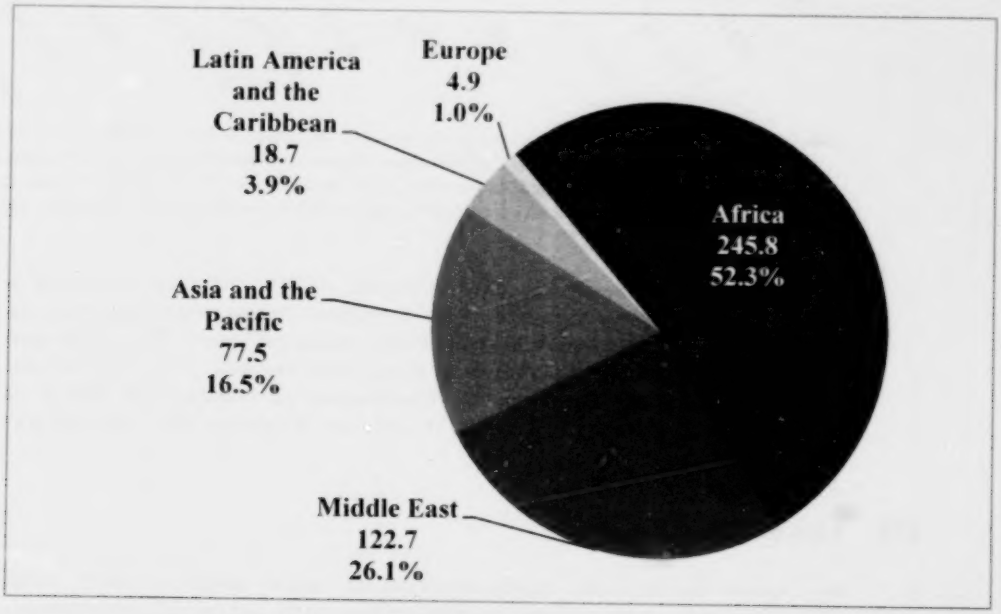
11. A total of $77.5 million was allocated to address humanitarian needs in Asia and the Pacific, representing nearly 16.5 per cent of all allocations in 2015, more than double the share compared with 2014. A total of $23.2 million to the region was for climate-related emergencies, not including the $19.1 million allocated for relief in Nepal.

12. A total of $18.7 million was allocated to address humanitarian needs in Latin America and the Caribbean, mainly through the rapid response window for climate-related needs, and for the lingering cholera epidemic in Haiti. Through the underfunded emergencies window, the Fund allocated nearly $3 million for needs related to protracted internal strife in Colombia. Allocations to this region were 3.9 per cent of the Fund's total allocations, a drop from 5.9 per cent of total allocations in 2014 (see figure III).

Figure III

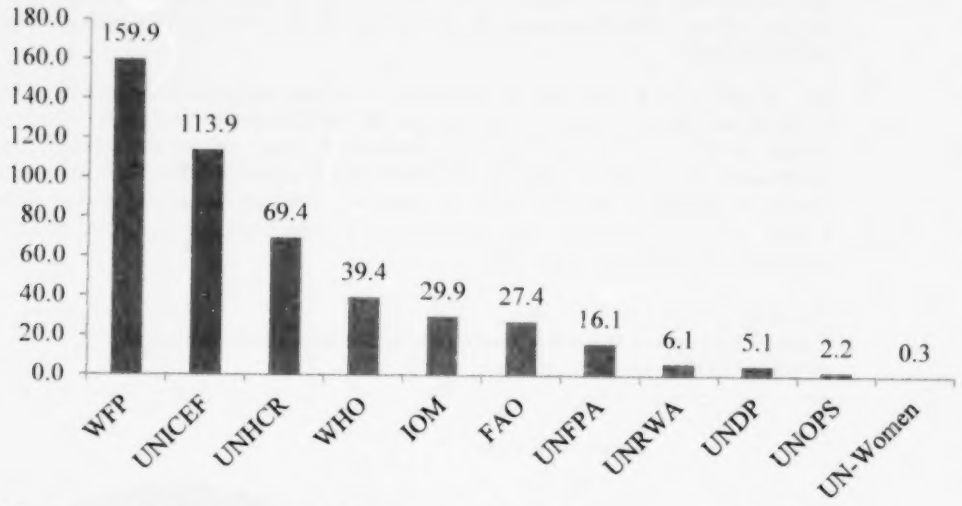
Central Emergency Response Fund, 2015 grant allocations by region

(Millions of United States dollars and percentage)



13. As in previous years, the agencies receiving the largest grant allocations were the World Food Programme (WFP) ($159.9 million for 83 projects in 40 countries), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) ($113.9 million for 131 projects in 41 countries) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) ($69.4 million for 62 projects in 31 countries) (see figure IV for details).

Figure IV
Central Emergency Response Fund, 2015 grant allocations by agency
(Millions of United States dollars)



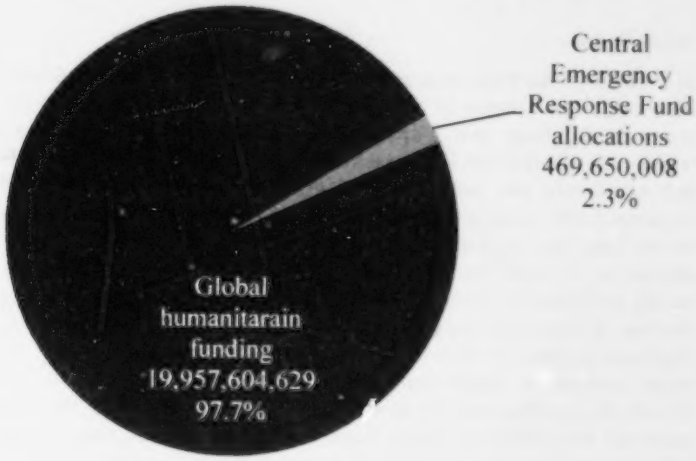
Abbreviations: FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; UNOPS, United Nations Office for Project Services; UNRWA, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; UN-Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; and WHO, World Health Organization.

14. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/119, the Fund maintains a $30 million loan facility to provide loans to eligible organizations while they are mobilizing resources. In March 2015, WFP fully repaid the loan of $27 million used to support the response to the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic. A $7.3 million loan was approved for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in October 2015 to bridge the funding gap in a number of field projects. This loan was fully repaid by the end of 2015.

III. Use of the Fund

15. Global humanitarian needs continued at record levels in 2015. Some 125 million people were affected by humanitarian crises and overall disbursements in 2015 reflected the high levels of need in numerous countries. Global humanitarian funding for 2015 reached $19.9 billion. The Fund's disbursements represented 2.3 per cent of that funding (see figure V).

Figure V
Central Emergency Response Fund, 2015 allocations as a percentage of global funding
(United States dollars and percentage)



Source: Financial Tracking Service of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

16. The Fund continued to ensure that allocations focused on the most urgent life-saving needs of crisis-affected people. In an increasingly complex operational environment, strategic decisions help to maximize the impact of limited Fund allocations in meeting beneficiaries' urgent needs. Doing so requires planning and prioritization of activities by humanitarian country teams and resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators through identifying the most critical needs to target with Fund allocations.

17. For every Fund application, the resident coordinator and/or the humanitarian coordinator leads a process by the humanitarian country team to develop submissions that prioritize essential life-saving activities in a strategic, focused and coherent manner, aiming to achieve specific common humanitarian objectives.

18. The Emergency Relief Coordinator has used allocations from the Fund to highlight a new or emerging crisis, or to draw attention to the regional implications of a crisis or a situation where there is a dire need for funding for humanitarian action. In this sense, Fund allocations can act as a catalyst for global advocacy. Examples of the strategic use of Fund allocations in 2015 are highlighted below.

A. The Fund and system-wide level-three emergencies and protracted crises

19. In 2015, the Fund allocated grants for humanitarian response in level-three emergencies in Iraq, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. For these crises, 2015 brought intensified and escalated needs that required funding through the rapid response window (Iraq, South Sudan and Yemen) and the underfunded emergencies window (Syrian Arab Republic). The aim is for the Fund to support an emergency only once. However, a significant deterioration in a protracted crisis, a

flare up of conflict, or new access to people requiring immediate assistance may trigger additional allocations, such as in South Sudan and Yemen. The Emergency Relief Coordinator allocated $152 million for the humanitarian response related to these level-three crises, or about one third of 2015 allocations.

South Sudan

20. In 2015, the Fund allocated $13.4 million for response in South Sudan. Grants were made to a number of agencies to provide immediate life-saving assistance for needs arising from new displacement due to fighting in the greater Upper Nile region. The conflict cut off hundreds of thousands of people from their livelihoods and eliminated the year's normal growing season. The Fund allocated rapid-response funds to support newly displaced persons in June and emergency survival kits in July, and in response to a cholera outbreak in August. Much of the Fund's allocations to South Sudan supported rapid-response mechanisms that provided life-saving assistance in difficult-to-reach areas. Agencies used more than $5 million to develop and provide (sometimes by airdrops) 30,000 emergency survival kits to displaced people. The kits contain mosquito nets, vegetable seeds, fishing supplies, water containers, water-purification tablets, oral rehydration salts, nutritional biscuits for children and kitchen items. An additional $7.1 million was disbursed to assist the new influx of South Sudanese refugees in the Sudan's White Nile State with emergency water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition and protection.

Yemen

21. In 2015, the Fund allocated $44.3 million for humanitarian aid in Yemen. This was the highest amount of funding provided for a response in any single country in 2015. The Fund provided rapid-response allocations for interventions in June, July, September, October and November 2015 following a spike in the conflict in March, and in response to the severe deterioration of the situation during the year. By the end of 2015, more than 21.2 million Yemenis, or four out of every five people, required humanitarian assistance. Funding went towards improving health, nutrition, protection, water, sanitation and food security, and for providing shelter and non-food items in a holistic response to widespread need. The Fund also allocated $5.3 million to help Yemeni refugees in Somalia.

Iraq

22. The Fund made allocations totalling $12.5 million for humanitarian assistance in Iraq in 2015. Fund allocations supported Syrian refugees in Iraq (see also below). The Fund also acted swiftly to respond to a cholera outbreak by allocating $4.5 million to UNICEF and WHO in October and November. The agencies provided water, sanitation and hygiene services and cholera vaccinations in 62 camps in 13 governorates.

Syrian Arab Republic

23. The Emergency Relief Coordinator allocated $77.4 million in 2015 to meet needs related to the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic. Within the Syrian Arab Republic, $29.9 million went to eight organizations to bring assistance to millions of Syrians affected by the ongoing conflict and the waves of new displacement in 2015. The largest grant was to WFP to provide food assistance; the second-largest

grant was to UNHCR to provide essential items such as mattresses, blankets, plastic sheeting, water containers, cooking utensils and hygiene kits for internally displaced Syrians. Fund allocations provided small-livestock holders with emergency agricultural assistance. Allocations were also used to provide support in health, water and sanitation and cash assistance for Palestinians living in the country.

24. The first allocations to Iraq in early 2015, through the underfunded emergencies window, focused on immediate needs for Syrian refugees in Iraq. Recipient agencies used Fund allocations to provide food assistance, address high-priority unmet needs related to water, sanitation and hygiene, and prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence. A total of $8 million was provided for assistance to Syrians in Iraq. The Fund also allocated funds to Lebanon ($18 million), Jordan ($9 million), Turkey ($9 million) and Egypt ($3.5 million) for humanitarian assistance related to the Syrian crisis, notably to aid some of the 4.8 million Syrians registered as refugees in these countries.

B. Neglected crises and the role of the Fund

25. Large numbers of people have lived for long periods in places where there is no spotlight on their plight; but lack of attention does not make their needs any less real. Through its underfunded emergencies window, the Fund provided relief for some of them and turned attention to these crises. The Fund's first underfunded-emergencies round of 2015 focused on life-saving action in 12 countries. A total of $77.4 million went to relief work in response to the Syrian crisis, with allocations for aid agencies working in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Another $13 million helped humanitarian response operations in Africa's Great Lakes region (Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda). The second underfunded-emergencies round, in September 2015, focused on people affected by massive population displacements linked to long-standing crises in Afghanistan, Darfur (the Sudan), the Horn of Africa and Myanmar. A total of $8 million allowed aid agencies in Afghanistan to help sustain life-saving assistance; another $8.4 million went to fund humanitarian response, including emergency shelter and improved access to health care, for people in Bangladesh and Myanmar. Some $21 million went to fund relief efforts in Chad and the Sudan to meet needs linked to the long-standing crisis in the Sudan's Darfur region, and $33 million went to agencies working in Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia to aid vulnerable communities facing recurring cycles of conflict and climatic shocks.

C. Natural disasters

26. The Fund's agility enabled early, crucial humanitarian response to a number of natural disasters in 2015. These included climate-related emergencies ranging from floods (Malawi and Mozambique in the first quarter of 2015) to cyclones (Vanuatu in March), earthquakes (Nepal in April and May) and the effects of El Niño. At times, the Fund was the first to provide funding, and in some cases relief supported by the Fund was available to beneficiaries within one day after the cataclysmic event. Overall, the Fund disbursed $143.1 million for needs related to climatic and

geophysical events, which represents a substantial increase compared with the amount of funding disbursed in 2014 for similar emergencies.[1]

27. An effective and rapid funding process underpinned the Fund's response to humanitarian needs related to El Niño which started in 2015 and continues into 2016. Depending on the country affected, people experienced floods, drought and food insecurity, leading to humanitarian needs and displacement. Based on forecasts and consultation with humanitarian partners in countries vulnerable to El Niño, the Fund allocated funding for the early action needed to mitigate El Niño's effects. The Fund disbursed $58.8 million for El Niño-related relief projects in El Salvador, Ethiopia, Haiti, Honduras, Malawi, Somalia and Zimbabwe. Much of the funding covered projects related to food needs, nutrition (including preventing and treating acute malnutrition), and mitigating food insecurity through agricultural and other support to livelihoods.

28. In February 2015, the Emergency Relief Coordinator approved allocations of $6.9 million and $3.2 million to meet the needs of people affected by flooding in Malawi and Mozambique respectively. In Malawi, assistance focused on camp coordination, shelter, food assistance, and water and sanitation projects. In Mozambique, agencies used Fund allocations to provide food aid, shelter and protection to 160,000 people. Fund allocations enabled FAO to provide maize, vegetable seeds and tools to 5,590 small-scale farming households so that they could take advantage of the moist post-flood conditions, jump-start food production and help to shorten the length of their dependence on food aid. Also in Mozambique, the Fund allocated about $750,000 to WHO and UNICEF in March to stem a cholera outbreak exacerbated by the flooding. This benefited more than 171,000 people, including 3,593 people admitted for cholera treatment.

29. Immediately following Tropical Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu in March 2015, the Fund allocated $5 million to kick-start relief operations. The storm affected about 160,000 people, more than half of the country's population, over an 80-island archipelago. Fund grants of nearly $650,000 enabled WFP to set up a shared logistics and telecommunications function that streamlined the approach by agencies to overcoming the major logistical hurdles. Agencies were thus able to provide crucial water and sanitation services (including clean water for drinking, cooking and bathing); emergency health, nutrition, education and protection services; non-food items including shelter; and food aid and agricultural support to re-establish food security. Thousands of households benefited across a wide swath of the country.

30. When an earthquake struck Nepal in April 2015, affecting about 5 million people across mountainous terrain, $14.9 million was released through the Fund's rapid response window within 48 hours. The initial allocation helped to meet urgent needs ranging from shelter and non-food items (IOM), health services (UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO), water and sanitation (UNICEF), protection of women and children (UNFPA and UNICEF) and emergency food aid (WFP). The Fund later disbursed an additional $4.2 million for Nepal after mudslides in June affected communities and limited the ability of humanitarian actors to reach survivors. The Fund's efficient approval process for releasing funds immediately helped to attract

[1] Allocations related to climatic events in 2014 accounted for 9 per cent of total disbursements. In 2015, the share increased to 26.4 per cent, or 30.4 per cent including allocations for geophysical events (earthquake).

other financial resources to the substantial relief effort. For example, the Fund was the first to provide funding towards earthquake relief by IOM in Nepal. Following the allocation, IOM was able to mobilize 10 donors. The Fund provided a total of $19.1 million for relief in Nepal.

D. Regional approach to funding from the Fund

31. In 2015, the Emergency Relief Coordinator released more than $58 million[4] to fund life-saving assistance for 2.4 million people affected by Boko Haram-related violence in West and Central Africa. Some $27.2 million was allocated in March 2015 and an additional $31 million was provided in late 2015 and early 2016. Funding included $14.1 million to assist 248,000 newly displaced people, vulnerable host-community members and women and children at risk of abuse and forced recruitment by Boko Haram in Cameroon. A total of $10.5 million was used to assist more than 187,000 vulnerable internally displaced persons, returnees, refugees, third-country nationals and host-community members in Ch[illegible]ho needed urgent protection, health, nutrition and food assistance, as well as non-food items, shelter and education. An additional $13.5 million was used to assist 350,000 displaced people who fled from border areas, as well as vulnerable host communities in Niger, and $20 million was used to assist more than 1.6 million internally displaced persons and vulnerable host communities in Nigeria.

32. Another example of the regional approach followed by the Fund was its response in the Horn of Africa. This approach helps relief agencies to address the complex and interlinked regional consequences of violent conflict, mass displacement of people and deepening food insecurity. In 2015, El Niño exacerbated existing vulnerabilities in countries in the Horn. The Fund's capacity to respond through both funding windows helped organizations to meet emerging needs in this complex area in a timely way. Assistance to the countries in the Horn of Africa reached $58.3 million in 2015 and included $27 million for Ethiopia, $25.3 million for Somalia, $3 million for Djibouti and $3 million for Eritrea.

IV. Use and management of the Fund

Advisory Group

33. The Advisory Group of the Central Emergency Response Fund was established following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 60/124 to advise the Secretary-General, through the Emergency Relief Coordinator, on the use and impact of the Fund. In 2015, the Advisory Group met in Geneva (May) and New York (October). In May, the group received a report on the progress of the High-level Panel on Humanitarian Financing and began to look ahead to the World Humanitarian Summit. The Group also discussed Fund allocations to level-three emergencies. In October, the group further discussed the World Humanitarian Summit and assessed results from two scoping studies on the future of the Fund and whether or not the Fund should raise its funding target.

[4] The amount includes disbursement in early 2016.

New underfunded emergencies methodology

34. In 2015, the methodology for assessing vulnerability, risk and underfunding continued to be improved in order to more strategically allocate funds for humanitarian response through the underfunded emergencies window. The objective of the methodology was to identify emergency situations with the most severe levels of underfunding, which is the primary criterion for inclusion in the underfunded-emergencies round. The number of data sources used to determine vulnerability was increased, in particular to include information on protection. The Fund secretariat has combined the data sources into the index for risk and vulnerability, which covers the full range of factors influencing the humanitarian situation. The index for risk management, an open, global humanitarian risk analysis platform forms the main component of the index for risk and vulnerability. In addition to using the factor of a low level of funding, which remains the primary criterion, the index for risk and vulnerability allows for the identification of those emergencies where humanitarian needs are most urgent. The new methodology was used for the first time in the 2016 underfunded-emergency allocation rounds.

Fund partnerships

35. In 2015, the Fund secretariat improved its analysis of partnerships with respect to Fund grants. The Fund provides direct funding only to United Nations agencies, but its grants are implemented in close partnership with local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), host Governments and Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, in all cases providing crucial funds to first responders. Through the far-reaching partnership networks of United Nations agencies, hundreds of implementing partners receive close to one quarter of all Fund allocations through subgrants each year. Typically, more than half of subgranted funds are for local front-line responders. Analysis of information provided in narrative reports submitted by resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators on the use of grants provided by the Fund in 2014 showed a continuation of the trend of increased involvement by international NGOs and national and local partners in the delivery of humanitarian action funded by the Fund. In 2014, more than $106 million was subgranted to agencies' implementing partners, not including the value of in-kind support in the form of relief supplies procured by United Nations agencies with Fund allocations. Of this, $51 million went to the operations of 133 international NGOs in 38 countries, and $55 million reached a reported 421 local partners in 37 countries through subgrants. Funding to local responders through United Nations partnerships represents a significant financial resource and an unparalleled global reach that complements other funding sources for local organizations. The Fund will continue to work with recipient agencies and other partners of Inter-Agency Standing Committee members to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of partnership arrangements with respect to Fund grants between United Nations agencies and their partners.

Monitoring

36. In 2015, the Fund piloted new guidance on monitoring the Fund at the field level, which will be rolled out in 2016. The guidance clarifies roles and responsibilities in monitoring the implementation of Fund grants, and it outlines activities that must take place to ensure the availability of necessary information for resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators and the humanitarian country team

during and after the implementation phase. The guidance note is meant to complement, not replace, existing Fund guidance, such as the guidance on narrative and financial reporting requirements. In addition, the Fund clarified the information-sharing responsibilities of agencies with respect to Fund-related information in its standard allocation communication to resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators. The Fund also developed a standard template allowing agencies to easily provide interim project status updates to the resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators during the implementation phase, in particular highlighting potential challenges that may affect planned delivery or require corrective actions. The template will be fully rolled out in 2016 along with the monitoring guidance.

Transparency

37. Full transparency has always been a core attribute of the Fund. Details of all allocations and contributions are published in real time on the Fund website and through the Financial Tracking Service. In 2015, the Fund augmented its transparency by beginning to publish data under the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards. This means that the Fund adheres to the IATI agreed framework and data from the Fund is easily comparable to data from the hundreds of other organizations that adhere to the same standards. In addition to publishing under the IATI standards, in 2015 Umoja (the United Nations enterprise resource planning system) was rolled out for the Secretariat, including the Fund. This is expected to increase transparency and enable more efficient and timely business processes, including faster disbursement of grant funds.

Performance and accountability framework and reviews of the Fund

38. Through the Fund's performance and accountability framework, independent reviews of relief work using grants from the Fund in 30 countries have been carried out since 2010. In 2015, this review base was expanded to include reviews of relief work carried out through Fund allocations in two large-scale regional crises centred on the Syrian Arab Republic (including Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon) and South Sudan (including Ethiopia, Kenya, the Sudan and Uganda). A third review was undertaken of the Fund's impact on work in Iraq beyond the scope of programmes related specifically to Syrian refugees in that country.

39. The Iraq and Syrian Arab Republic crisis reviews will be published once finalized.

40. The Fund allocated $116 million in 2014 to South Sudan and neighbouring countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, the Sudan and Uganda) in connection with the South Sudan crisis. The review of efforts in South Sudan found the Fund to be an important contributor to the start-up of life-saving interventions and a strong reinforcement of the role of the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator. Monetary contributions from the Fund in South Sudan were small compared with the need and with funding from other sources. However, the timeliness of allocations was important and the Fund played a crucial role in improving the living conditions of internally displaced persons. The full report is available on the Fund website.

Reporting of the Fund

41. In 2015, the Fund continued to improve its reporting, with a focus on achieving simpler and less time-consuming reporting from partners, ensuring that information in the reports is fully used to improve Fund performance and to document results and added value. The most recent complete analysis, as at early 2016, is for a full annual reporting cycle of funds disbursed in 2014. It is based on resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator reports on the use of Fund allocations. This analysis of the 2014 reports is based on data from 76 reports covering 589 agency projects in 45 countries, for a total funding of $461 million. The quality and timeliness of these reports have continued to improve. The analysis looked at numbers of people reached with the funds, the scope of subgranting of funds by recipient agencies to their implementing partners, and the value added of the Fund as assessed by the resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators and the country teams. In addition, lessons learned submitted through the reports were grouped by theme and analysed and will inform relevant follow-up initiatives by the Fund. Reports presenting the analysis of the various data are available on the Fund website.

42. Reporting on the number of people reached with the help of the Fund has become better and more rigorous. The complete analysis of 2014 funding found the following numbers of beneficiaries of the Fund by sector in 2014: health (an estimated 19.8 million people reached through 142 projects in 38 countries, and an additional 32.7 million people reached through Ebola-related public-health campaigns in West Africa); food (an estimated 7 million people reached through 67 projects in 35 countries); water and sanitation (an estimated 6.6 million people reached through 75 projects in 32 countries); protection (an estimated 4.1 million people reached, including 400,000 children, in 83 projects in 23 countries); nutrition (an estimated 4.1 million people benefiting in 28 countries); and agriculture and livelihood support (an estimated 3 million people reached through 35 projects in 21 countries). Significant numbers of people were reached in camp management (1 million), shelter and non-food items (800,000), mine action (500,000), education (200,000) and multisector assistance for refugees (1.1 million).

43. NGOs and other partners are extremely important to the success of the Fund in reaching people with timely, life-saving assistance. Reports on the use of 2014 grants show that recipient agencies made 1,214 subgrants to implementing partners, corresponding to a total value of $106 million out of $471 million, or 22.6 per cent of total 2014 funding, not including the value of in-kind support in the form of relief supplies procured with Fund allocations. This was the highest-ever reported in terms of number and volume of subgrants. A total of 12 per cent of all funds (or about half of all subgranted monies) went to 421 different local implementing partners: national NGOs, host Governments and national Red Cross/Red Crescent societies in 37 countries. The remainder went to the operations of 133 international NGOs in 38 countries.

44. In terms of the strategic value added of the Fund beyond its value as a source of additional humanitarian funding, analysis of the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator reports indicates that for nearly 90 per cent of rapid-response allocations from the Fund, the teams responsible for coordinating the humanitarian response in each country found that the Fund allocations led to fast delivery of assistance, while for just over 10 per cent of allocations, it was noted that the funding partially led to fast delivery of assistance. All but two reports found

that the Fund had helped partners to respond to time-critical needs, whereas the remaining two reports concluded that the Fund had partly done so. In addition, more than 90 per cent of reports found that Fund allocations helped to improve coordination among the humanitarian community. Close to 60 per cent of reports found that Fund allocations had in some way helped to improve resource mobilization from other sources. Approximately 40 per cent assessed that Fund allocations might have helped to mobilize additional resources, and two reports concluded that the Fund had not played a role in securing additional funding.

Accountability to affected people and gender inclusion

45. The Fund is not an operational entity, therefore it cannot directly incorporate accountability to affected people measures into humanitarian programming. However, the Fund promotes accountability to affected people by ensuring that it is incorporated and made visible throughout the Fund programme cycle. Accountability to affected people is reflected in Fund proposals through a number of questions in the Fund application template at different levels of the submission (i.e., at strategic, sectoral and project levels). To strengthen information on accountability to affected people in the Fund programme cycle, it has been included as a separate project-reporting item for recipient agencies in the Fund narrative reporting template. This provides the Fund secretariat with systematic feedback on how commitments to accountability to affected people have been considered in projects financed from the Fund (this information is publicly available through the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator reports posted on the Fund website).

46. The Fund secretariat implemented a new and improved application template in January 2015 after comprehensively testing it in 2014 for numerous rapid-response applications and during the second underfunded-emergencies round in 2014. The new template requires more detailed information on issues related to gender and gender-based violence. The application template asks for sex- and age-disaggregated data, and gender is mainstreamed throughout. For example, a gender analysis is requested in the section on humanitarian context and response. Applicants are asked to describe how gender was taken into account during the prioritization process, and gender issues should, when possible, be reflected in the logical framework of individual Fund projects. The new template includes a gender marker. As a follow-up to the commitments to keep girls and women safe during emergencies made at an event in London in 2013,[5] the template now includes a dedicated self-assessment question on whether gender-based violence has been considered in project design.

Fraud management

47. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Fund secretariat take the potential misuse of grants from the Fund extremely seriously. In 2015, the Fund Advisory Group endorsed guidelines for procedures for sharing fraud-related information with donors. Following this, the Fund secretariat developed standard operating procedures on how it will handle cases of potential fraud. These include guidance on the frequency and type of information concerning possible cases that must be reported by recipient agencies and guidance on when

[5] Keep Her Safe event. See www.gov.uk/government/news/greening-girls-and-women-must-be-kept-safe-in-emergencies.

and how donors should be notified of credible cases of potential fraudulent use of funds. These new procedures and guidelines were implemented in 2015. In early 2016, one case of possible fraudulent use of funds by partners under a project using a Fund grant was reported to the Fund secretariat. Communication and follow-up were conducted in accordance with the guidance and the standard operating procedures. Based on evidence gathered during investigations by the respective agency's investigative office, it was found that the allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

Reduction in programme support costs

48. In 2015, the Fund secretariat continued its efforts to make the Fund as efficient and effective as possible, and began to explore the possible reduction of its programme support cost from 3 per cent to 2 per cent. The reduction is not expected to have any adverse impact on Fund management and it is estimated that it will annually channel an additional approximately $4 million into the Fund's humanitarian programming budget. This estimate is based on the funding level of $450 million per year.

10-year anniversary of the Fund

49. A high-level conference in December 2015 (see below) kicked off the Fund's 10-year-anniversary campaign. Member States, observers, United Nations officials and representatives of the humanitarian community attended the event, which acknowledged the indispensable role of the Fund and the importance of its agility within the humanitarian financing landscape. The Fund's 10-year anniversary coincides with an important juncture in the vision for humanitarian financing, with a course for the future established at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, in May 2016.

Learning engagement

50. In 2015, the Fund secretariat continued to roll out a revamped programme for engaging Fund focal points and decision makers, which had been piloted in 2014. The programme's interactive workshops target key participants in the Fund process, including resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators, United Nations country teams, humanitarian cluster and sector leads, and relevant staff of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The workshops provide an array of tools for field and headquarters personnel to use in navigating the challenges of deploying funds strategically and prioritizing the most urgent humanitarian needs. The Fund secretariat delivered five field-based workshops and two webinars to staff in the field in 2015. Three headquarters sessions were delivered for crucial stakeholders who support the Fund process. This strategic engagement led to more focused, better-prioritized Fund submissions from humanitarian country teams. A more extensive roll-out is scheduled to take place in 2016.

V. Funding levels

51. The total amount of pledges for 2015 was $409.5 million, of which $400.3 million was received as at 31 December 2015 (including $12.4 million received in 2014 and $387.9 million received in 2015) from 54 Member States and

observers, one regional authority (the regional Government of Flanders, Belgium), one international organization (the International Maritime Organization), a private sector entity (the Coloplast Corporation) and individual donors. In addition, between 1 January and 31 December 2015, $9.8 million was received against 2014 pledges, and $76.5 million was advanced for 2016 by a number of donors. The shortfall of $49.7 million compared with the funding target of $450 million was largely due to exchange rate fluctuations driven by a strong United States dollar vis-à-vis donor currencies, coupled with the inability of core Fund supporters to provide additional contributions at the end of the year. The Fund used reserves to disburse more than it received, given the high level of demonstrated need in the applications received. As a consequence, the Fund's reserve was much lower at the end of 2015 than in previous years.

52. The top 10 donors pledged 89 per cent of all pledged contributions in 2015, which is nearly identical to the proportion contributed by the top 10 donors in 2014. The top 10 donors in 2015 were (in order of contribution level) the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Germany, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Belgium and Switzerland. Andorra, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates increased their contributions in 2015 compared with the previous year. Colombia, Cyprus, Lithuania, Malaysia, the Philippines and Serbia returned to the donor base. However, there was little progress in significantly increasing contributions from donors outside the top 10 contributors.

53. From its inception in 2006 through to December 2015, the Fund received $4.2 billion in contributions from 125 Member States and observers, three regional authorities, as well as foundations, corporate donors and individuals. It supported humanitarian response in 93 countries.

54. The annual high-level conference to pledge for 2016 was held in New York in December 2015. More than 38 Member States, observers and regional Governments made pledges to the Fund in an amount equivalent to nearly $252 million. This was significantly lower than the previous year because a number of key donors delayed announcement of their pledges.

VI. The Fund for the Future: conclusions and recommendations

55. Thanks to the generosity of donors, in 2015 the Fund achieved the objectives assigned to it by the General Assembly.

56. The number of people requiring humanitarian assistance and the funding needed to meet their needs are reaching record highs, and the funding gap for humanitarian action to meet current needs is wide. At the same time, the resources available from the Fund have remained unchanged.

57. Against this backdrop, the Secretary-General has called for the Fund to be expanded to $1 billion by 2018 to help close the funding gap. This proposal received broad support from Member States at the round table on financing at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016. An expanded Fund is needed to ensure that it keeps pace with the escalating needs and remains an effective tool able to respond to the current scale, complexity and range of crises. An expanded Fund would have a greater impact while still maintaining its focus, scope and speed.

58. At the World Humanitarian Summit, Member States embraced the idea of a grand bargain: donors and aid partners must work together to put more means into the hands of those people and communities requiring assistance, and do so more efficiently. The Fund already operates along these principles and has proved itself to be an efficient, effective and transparent instrument for delivering humanitarian assistance.

59. Broadening the donor base and cultivating larger contributions from existing donors, coupled with innovative financing solutions, will enable the Fund to respond even more effectively to the core goal of all humanitarian actors: meeting urgent needs and saving the lives of millions of people experiencing hardship around the globe.

Annex I

A. Central Emergency Response Fund grant element: statement of financial performance from 1 January to 31 December 2015[a]

(United States dollars)

Revenue	
Voluntary contributions[b]	528 995 470
Other transfers	92 164
Investment revenue[c]	990 304
Other exchange revenue	143 576
Total revenue	**530 221 514**
Expenses	
Grants and other transfers	453 711 412
Other operating expenses[d]	34 652 146
Total expenses	**488 363 558**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	**41 857 956**

B. Central Emergency Response Fund grant element: statement of changes in net assets from 1 January to 31 December 2015[a]

(United States dollars)

Net assets as at 31 December 2014	**263 930 460**
Change in net assets	
Surplus for the year	**41 857 956**
Total change in net assets	**41 857 956**
Net assets as at 31 December 2015	**305 788 416**

[a] Statements were prepared in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

[b] Represents voluntary contributions in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards. See annex II for contributions pledged for 2015.

[c] Includes net investment revenue of $110,624 earned on the loan component of the Central Emergency Response Fund in accordance with General Assembly resolution 66/119.

[d] Includes programme support costs (United Nations) of $13,146,476 and net exchange losses of $20,168,460.

Annex II

Central Emergency Response Fund grant element: contributions pledged from 1 January to 31 December 2015

(United States dollars)

Contributor	*Pledged contributions*[a]
Member States and observers	
Andorra	44 139
Armenia	5 000
Australia	9 201 954
Belgium	10 893 246
Canada	28 627 069
Chile	30 000
China	500 000
Colombia	235 000
Côte d'Ivoire	10 000
Cyprus	14 223
Denmark	14 212 621
Djibouti	1 000
Estonia	113 379
Finland	7 583 965
Germany	43 777 556
Guyana	2 179
Iceland	100 000
India	500 000
Indonesia	200 000
Ireland	12 195 122
Italy	1 133 787
Japan	1 402 809
Kuwait	1 000 000
Liechtenstein	271 769
Lithuania	22 676
Luxembourg	4 535 147
Malaysia	50 000
Mexico	250 000
Monaco	56 689
Myanmar	10 000
Netherlands	59 588 299
New Zealand	2 601 908
Norway	50 248 099
Pakistan	10 000
Peru	4 167

Contributor	*Pledged contributions*[a]
Philippines	10 000
Poland	204 823
Portugal	56 689
Republic of Korea	4 500 000
Russian Federation	1 500 000
San Marino	2 188
Saudi Arabia	150 000
Serbia	5 000
Singapore	50 000
South Africa	172 563
Spain	2 197 802
Sweden	53 212 209
Switzerland	10 302 667
Thailand	20 000
Trinidad and Tobago	20 000
Turkey	450 000
United Arab Emirates	1 000 000
United Kingdom	82 661 982
United States	3 000 000
Viet Nam	10 000
Sovereign Military Order of Malta	5 000
Total, Member States and observers	**408 962 726**
Regional and local authorities	
Government of Flanders (Belgium)	340 136
Total, regional and local authorities	**340 136**
Others	
Private donations outside the United Nations Foundation (under $50,000)	38 178
Private donations through the United Nations Foundation (under $50,000)	99 756
Cigna Foundation through the United Nations Foundation	50 000[b]
Total, others	**187 934**
Total	**409 490 796**

[a] Contributions are based on the pledged year of the donors and differ from the amount reported as revenue under the International Public Sector Accounting Standards. Actual received contributions may differ from the originally recorded pledges owing to fluctuations in exchange rates.

[b] Contribution of $50,000 collected through the United Nations Foundation in 2014 but received by the Fund in 2015.

Annex III

Total grants allocated from the Central Emergency Response Fund from 1 January to 31 December 2015

(United States dollars)

Country	*Rapid response*	*Underfunded emergencies*	*Total*
Yemen	44 250 104		44 250 104
Syrian Arab Republic		29 926 021	29 926 021
Ethiopia	17 003 929	10 015 968	27 019 897
Somalia	5 300 084	19 989 234	25 289 318
Sudan	9 079 147	15 116 739	24 195 886
Nepal	19 113 716		19 113 716
Lebanon		18 004 139	18 004 139
Malawi	16 925 025		16 925 025
Chad	10 515 475	5 998 567	16 514 042
Myanmar	10 405 409	5 367 651	15 773 060
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6 792 923	8 047 670	14 840 593
Cameroon	14 071 268		14 071 268
Afghanistan	5 802 858	7 983 646	13 786 504
Niger	13 741 648		13 741 648
South Sudan	13 446 494		13 446 494
Iraq	4 490 040	7 988 899	12 478 939
Central African Republic	11 556 590		11 556 590
Pakistan	11 000 547		11 000 547
Rwanda	7 984 746	2 498 220	10 482 966
Nigeria	9 889 075		9 889 075
Haiti	9 157 785		9 157 785
United Republic of Tanzania	9 156 319		9 156 319
Jordan		9 000 346	9 000 346
Turkey		8 999 844	8 999 844
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	6 276 701	2 000 285	8 276 986
Zimbabwe	8 110 712		8 110 712
Algeria	5 051 640		5 051 640
Vanuatu	5 038 408		5 038 408
Ukraine	4 920 172		4 920 172
Mozambique	3 996 365		3 996 365
Egypt		3 500 065	3 500 065
Uganda	3 238 788		3 238 788
Djibouti		3 000 059	3 000 059
Colombia		2 994 382	2 994 382
Eritrea		2 993 896	2 993 896
Bangladesh		2 992 959	2 992 959

Country	*Rapid response*	*Underfunded emergencies*	*Total*
El Salvador	2 710 000		2 710 000
Mauritania	2 532 163		2 532 163
Burundi		2 495 246	2 495 246
Madagascar	2 294 798		2 294 798
Honduras	2 187 908		2 187 908
Philippines	1 512 074		1 512 074
Libya	1 491 012		1 491 012
Peru	914 395		914 395
Chile	777 854		777 854
Total	**300 736 172**	**168 913 836**	**469 650 008**

Note: The amount of total allocated funds in this annex is based on the approval of the Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Annex IV

Central Emergency Response Fund loans: statement of changes in net assets from 1 January to 31 December 2015[a]

(United States dollars)

Net assets as at 31 December 2014	30 000 000
Change in net assets	
Surplus for the year	–
Total change in net assets	–
Net assets as at 31 December 2015	**30 000 000**

[a] Statements were prepared in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

Annex V

Central Emergency Response Fund loans from 1 January to 31 December 2015

(United States dollars)

Agency	*Country/region*	*Year of disbursement*	*Amount*
Outstanding loans as at 1 January 2015			
World Food Programme	Syrian Arab Republic	2013	27 000 000
Total			**27 000 000**
Loans disbursed from 1 January to 31 December 2015			
OCHA	OCHA regional/country offices	2015	7 327 854
Total			**7 327 854**
Loans repaid from 1 January to 31 December 2015			
World Food Programme	Syrian Arab Republic	2013	27 000 000
OCHA	OCHA regional/country offices	2015	7 327 854
Total			**34 327 854**
Outstanding loans as at 31 December 2015			
Total			–

Abbreviation: OCHA, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat.